

How could initial teacher education programmes in New Zealand accommodate and assist educational change?

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Running head : Initial teacher education for educational change

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Abstract

Currently the New Zealand school system is undergoing changes as it introduces a new national curriculum. *The New Zealand Curriculum* is focussed on outcomes and provides the underlying philosophy, guidelines and framework for schools to design and review their curriculum. In addition, teachers need to incorporate several other Ministry initiatives such as *Schools Plus*, *Ka Hikitea – Managing for Success – the Maori Education Strategy from 2008 to 2012* and *The Pasifika Education Plan, 2006-2010*. For all of these initiatives, teachers need to keep what is best for the student at the forefront of their teaching and decision-making.

Initial teacher education programmes need to respond to these initiatives, in terms of overarching philosophy, course structure and practical applications in courses. We have used the teacher education for the future project to help us identify key aspects of our initial teacher education programmes that need attention. This project is very timely in that it informs our programme review processes. We surveyed multiple stakeholders who were teachers, student teachers and teacher educators. Participants were asked to rank the aims of education and their preferred future focus for initial teacher education programmes. The implications for the design and facilitation of our initial teacher education courses are discussed.

Key words: teacher education, future, New Zealand

Introduction

Firstly we outline the New Zealand context and describe the current Ministry initiatives that need to be taken into account when reviewing initial teacher education programmes. We also discuss the degree of professional choice that is characteristic of education in New Zealand for early childhood and schooling settings.

The research process for the project reported here used a futures approach in that it indicated possible focus ideas for participants and asked them to rank their top 5 ideas. This required participants to consider their present experience, likely educational challenges and changes, and how they should be taken into account when implementing initial teacher education programmes. A limitation of using a futures approach is that we can only make predictions and recommendations based on the participants' perceptions. However, we attempt to align these perceptions with current Ministry initiatives and selected literature in our discussion and propose some recommendations for consideration in the final section.

The New Zealand context – enabling constraints

The New Zealand Curriculum was released by the Ministry of Education in 2007 to be implemented in schools by 2010. It focuses on *learning* outcomes and provides the underlying philosophy, guidelines and framework for schools to creatively and actively design and review their own curriculums rather than prescribing content and what teachers and schools must “deliver”. This active professional responsibility for designing and implementing teaching and learning experiences to meet the needs of learners, has been a strong element of the New Zealand schooling system over the past fifteen years or so. This Ministry document provides a vision, overarching values, key

competencies and learning areas. The philosophy and competencies are integrally bound with multiple dimensions associated with learning such as fostering a disposition to learn, meta-learning, empowering students to become experts on their own learning and embedding learning in rich learning contexts. The emphasis of the philosophy is on teachers as promoters of learning (Conner, 2004) rather than assuming teachers have knowledge that they will *transmit* to students. This is enabling change in that reviews of initial teacher education at the University of Canterbury have to accommodate, model and assist these aspects of learning.

Schools Plus is being developed in the light of relatively low retention rates of New Zealanders in education up to the age of 18 years. It advocates an inter-agency approach whereby each student has an individual education plan which can be flexibly implemented in a variety of institutions and employment situations. Full implementation of *Schools Plus* is expected to occur between 2011 and 2013.

Ka Hikitia has been launched in response to the relatively low retention and achievement rates of Maori in New Zealand schools. It focuses on research-based evidence of successful strategies that will enhance the achievement of Maori. It also indicates the principles of inclusion, aspirations for the success of Maori in education, and the acceptance by New Zealand society that Maori may want to be educated as Maori.

The Pasifika Education Plan, 2006 – 2010 provides strategic direction for coordinating all policies that aim to improve educational outcomes for Pasifika peoples. The Plan's success requires Pasifika families and communities, education services and Government to work together.

In reviewing our qualifications and courses, we have to take into account both external and internal parameters that constrain an ideal programme. These include:

- External agency requirements – e.g. New Zealand Teachers' Council; stakeholder expectations – e.g. early childhood educators and school principals and
- Internal constraints within the university.

External agency requirements

The New Zealand Teachers' Council (2005) (NZTC) has high expectations for initial teacher education programmes, such as prescribed requirements for teaching practices as well as setting graduating standards that graduates are expected to meet. The New Zealand Ministry of Education alongside the NZTC, determine the entry-level qualifications for students enrolling into the qualifications. StudyLink is an agency that funds student loans to pay course fees and as such, prescribes the number of weeks that constitute a full-time course and therefore how long the course needs to be for meeting funding requirements. The course length requirement limits our ability to comply with university policies and practices regarding start and finish dates for courses.

Stakeholder expectations

Schools generally require beginning teachers to be equipped to teach over a range of curriculum areas. Therefore, initial teacher education programmes have to ensure new teachers have multiple curriculum expertise. Early childhood centers and schools also limit the number of student teachers on teaching practice at any one time. There is an

expectation from schools that students have high levels of initial competence in both class management and curriculum delivery. Teaching as a profession and the quality of teachers/teaching is the subject of comment in the wider community and especially the media. Comments tend to reflect a nostalgic and simplistic view of schools as they once were and to which many would like to see a return. This year, 2008, is an election year and therefore issues about education are highlighted as politicians use populist educational strategies to court voters. There is an assumption that effective initial teacher education will solve some of the issues regarding the quality of teachers and in education in general. While this is true to some extent, that is, initial teacher education provides opportunities to enable change in teachers, teaching and education in general, there are many other forces that limit the degree of possible change (Fullan, 2007).

Internal constraints within the university

Following the merging of Colleges of Education with universities, the autonomy that the Colleges of Education once had, has disappeared. Within the university environment there are competing demands on faculty for teaching and research outputs. The drive for increasing research outputs through the current Performance Based Research Funding (PBRF) that the New Zealand government uses to partially fund tertiary institutions, is reducing the amount of time staff can spend on course renewal, innovative teaching and in face-to face sessions with students. As well, universities are facing financial constraints in some teacher education qualifications, due to declining enrolments and the costs associated with placing students in centres and schools throughout New Zealand on teaching practices.

This means that in bringing about transformative changes to qualifications to prepare teachers to meet the competing demands of the 21st century, we need to carefully consider what will have the most immediate results. This requires asking the big questions about what is really valued, how it is best portrayed to student teachers and how we can inspire teacher development. It also requires us to ask how we can respond to educational changes and initiatives or assist educational change. Currently we are considering what structures, content, skills and dispositions contribute to developing excellence in teaching that align with changes in early childhood centers and schools. If we can identify what excellence in teaching involves, we are more likely to aim and focus on those areas that truly make a difference. As Hattie (2003) has indicated, teachers can have a huge influence on school student learning but ideally they should have exceptional effects on student outcomes. Hattie (2003, p. 3) states:

We need to ensure that this greatest influence is optimized to have powerful and sensationally positive effects on the learner. Teachers can and usually do have positive effects, but they must have exceptional effects. We need to direct attention to higher quality teaching, and higher expectations that students can meet appropriate challenges.

Hattie and Jager (2004) identified that expert teachers can:

- Identify essential representations of their subject
- Guide learning through classroom interactions
- Monitor learning and provide feedback
- Attend to affective attributes, and

- Influence student outcomes

In order to implement the intentions of the Ministry of Education through the range of initiatives as indicated above, it will not be enough for teachers to shift the ways they behave, or the ways they think - they will also need to shift the ways they 'know' (an 'epistemological shift') (Gilbert, 2005; Davis, Sumara & Luce-Kapler, 2008). This involves a shift of perceptions and relationships that impact on all other areas, including the way teachers perceive themselves. Initial teacher education must prepare new teachers for developing different ways of knowing.

Current Teacher Education in New Zealand

Currently initial teacher education in New Zealand provides curriculum knowledge, subject matter knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and knowledge of child development as well as some aspects of psychology and sociology to varying degrees alongside professional practice experience. These aspects tend to be driven by government produced curriculum documents for Early childhood education and schooling which as mentioned above, are overviews of a vision, driving values, key competencies and learning areas. The documents do not indicate how teachers should teach nor do they provide an indication of the extent to which different aspects should be emphasised. There are national resource bank assessments for different curriculum areas at multiple levels, but the national standard assessments for qualifications (that contribute to the National Certificates in Educational Achievement) only apply to years 11, 12 and 13.

There has also been a huge array of text and on-line resources produced to support schooling, particularly by the government publisher, *Learning Media*, as well as independent publishers. Teaching and learning in New Zealand schools is therefore guided by a range of support materials created by the Ministry of Education as well as a range of texts and other teacher resources created by teachers themselves and through private enterprise. There are no set national text books for any subject. Teachers within schools choose what resources they require and it is up to the schools to use their resource funding to support what teachers want. In this regard there is a lot of professional freedom for teachers in New Zealand schools to choose how they will design their own lessons and choose resources appropriate for the students and the lessons that they themselves design for their classes. While teachers see this as empowering, it also requires a lot of effort and professional judgments as to what is appropriate. Part of the role of initial teacher education is to enable student teachers to become familiar with the existing curricula, possible pedagogies and a range of resources that schools may select from, when developing teaching and learning programmes.

The expected roles of teachers in New Zealand include designing and implementing teaching and learning activities in response to what their students already know and can do. This requires teachers to evaluate prior knowledge and skills. Then, school students are expected to have opportunities to experience appropriate tasks that will extend their learning. Increasingly students are also being given the opportunity to reflect on how they learn and what they need to do to improve their learning (Claxton, 2002; Conner, 2005). Teachers' roles are shifting from giving knowledge to being promoters of learning (Conner, 2004) where they act as mediators or people who guide the learning process through content. Some self-paced learning programmes operate in some schools, especially associated with information communication technologies (ICT). In general though, the teaching and learning experiences are interactive, where students contribute and share their ideas amongst themselves in small groups as much or more than with the

teacher. There is a shift towards communities of learners as described by Stoll, Fink and Earl (2003).

The mode of delivery of initial teacher education in New Zealand tends to model the teaching and learning processes described above, by providing small group interactive experiences for student teachers. Where possible in course work, links are made between appropriate pedagogies and learning theories. Critical reflection on the teaching and learning processes are integrated throughout all courses. Gilbert (2005, p. 212) comments on what she considers is needed for teacher education in New Zealand:

We no longer need the knowledge, skills and dispositions our schools are set up to provide....Schools are no longer people's main source of knowledge, and teachers are not the important authority figures they once were. Teachers, like many other professional groups are now service providers (and it is now common for the consumers of these services to question their quality).

The idea that teachers perceive themselves as life-long learners is promoted by Stoll, Fink and Earl (2003, p. 75) who state that:

Teachers can play a critical role in creating schools for learning as a move towards their preferred futures. How? By being consummate learners themselves.

Given the above, a number of questions about future initial teacher education programmes emerge. What shifts will be necessary for teachers in the future to understand and meet the needs of 21st century educational contexts? What kind of pedagogical processes might help with this shift? What are the limitations, challenges or issues arising in the application of these pedagogical processes?

In addition, teachers in New Zealand may find that they are required throughout their careers, to teach in several very different schooling contexts such as co-educational, single-sex, private, bilingual, rural or urban. In New Zealand, individual schools develop their own mission statements and have their own governing bodies (self-managing schools) which is carried out by a board of trustees for each school. The boards of trustees are also responsible for hiring staff, funding resources and determining how the curriculum will be delivered. Each school can therefore emphasise slightly different goals if they consider they are important for their students. Further, New Zealand schools tend to have a very high degree of diversity among the learners within a single class (Ministry of Education, 2000). Meeting the needs of individuals within a class has therefore been a focus of the education system for the last 6 years or so. Considering that the population is becoming more diverse as a result of immigration, one of the key issues for teaching in New Zealand schools in the future must be considering ways to meet the needs of individual learners. Therefore pre-service teacher education has to provide a sufficient range of content and experiences to prepare teachers for these employment possibilities.

There has also been a call for teachers in New Zealand to be more aware of the holistic, interactive and inductive nature of teaching (Grainger, 2003). This implies that teachers of the future need to be conversant with content, be aware of a range of possible

pedagogies and know when it is appropriate to use particular teaching and learning strategies. Teachers will need to be flexible and be able to adapt and change throughout a lesson depending on the responses and interest of their students or depending on the availability of resources. It is desirable that teachers clarify the main ideas that are not well understood or create additional opportunities and experiences for reinforcing learning. This is consistent with the emerging ideas internationally that teaching is a personal profession that is complex, unpredictable and dynamic (Fitzsimons & Fenwick, 1997). In New Zealand, teachers are expected to be flexible by designing and adapting lessons that are appropriate for their students, rather than reproducing lessons that have been prescribed (designed by someone else) or follow a set sequence based on commonly accepted pre-designed programmes. This requires teachers in New Zealand to plan carefully and be prepared to modify their plans even during a lesson. The key idea is that teachers are expected to plan their own lessons that are appropriate for the students in their classes in terms of relevance, content and skills.

Social and cultural influences are likely to impact on teaching and learning in the future. The development of relationship skills and understanding of identity are becoming critical in a multi cultural society. Student-centered learning methods may be more prevalent in the future where learners are required to develop relationships to enhance their learning. There is also an identified need (Ministry of Education, 2000) to help learners develop skills in controlling their own learning and the skills of memorization and elaboration. These align with greater self-awareness and reflection as ways to help learners become more autonomous, more self-directed and to think critically about what is being taught/learned (Conner, 2003; Gunstone & Northfield, 1994).

Methods

This paper reports on the perceptions of 104 participants about what the aims of education in New Zealand should be and therefore what needs to be included in initial teacher preparation programmes in the future. Volunteers were sought from the Graduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning courses for the student teacher participants, from initial teacher education staff at the University of Canterbury and teachers at seven high schools throughout the South Island of New Zealand. They included 23 teachers, 10 teacher educators and 71 student teachers in New Zealand. The surveys were carried out in April and May 2007. Ethical approval was obtained for this study from the Christchurch College of Education.

Items for the aims of education and the future focus for teacher education were derived from the first phase of the multinational Teacher Education for the Future Project (Conner & Greene, 2006). Participants were asked to rank order their top ten items that most closely aligned with their personal beliefs from a list of 29 aims and purposes of education and 24 areas that should be emphasized in future initial teacher education programmes. Participants were also asked to write comments to indicate how they implemented their stated purposes within the classroom, what obstacles and supports they encountered and how teacher education programmes could assist future teachers to incorporate their preferred objectives.

The numerical responses were weighted to reflect the ranking of the participants' ranking, i.e. the items ranked number one were awarded a weight of five, items ranked number 2, a weight of 4 and so on. The highest totals then gave an indication of the most highly ranked items for participant groups and for participants overall (Table 1). Participants comments were clustered according to questions and these were summarized. In our analysis, we have compared the perceptions of the aims and purposes of education with the perceptions of what should be included in future initial

teacher education programmes.

Results/Discussion

Question 1: Aims and Purposes of Education

Table 1

Item Rank	Teachers n=23	Teacher Educators n=10	Student Teachers n=71
1	(d) Help students acquire academic skills.	(d) Help students acquire academic skills.	(e) Increase students' motivation to learn.
2	(g) Prepare students to be critical thinkers.	(i) Discover/facilitate the realisation of each student's human potential.	(g) Prepare students to be critical thinkers.
3	(i) Discover/facilitate the realisation of each student's human potential.	(o) Develop students' respect for the values and beliefs of others.	(d) Help students acquire academic skills.
4	(f) Prepare students to be rational problem solvers and rational thinkers.	(f) Prepare students to be rational problem solvers and rational thinkers. (b) Secure in students the skills for independent living.	(f) Prepare students to be rational problem solvers and rational thinkers.
5	(n) Prepare students to be productive members of society.		(i) Discover/facilitate the realisation of each student's human potential.

Overall, the groups rated (d), (i) and (f) in their top 5 items for the aims and purposes of education. Teacher educators were the only ones to rate (b) *Secure in students the skills for independent living* and teachers were the only ones to rate (n) *Prepare students to be productive members of society*. Interestingly only student teachers rated (e) *Increase students' motivation to learn*.

Question 2: Teacher Education for the Future

Table 2

Item Rank	Teachers n=23	Teacher Educators n=10	Student Teachers n=71
1	(d) Employ student centred approaches.	(v) Be better prepared for teaching critical thinking.	(d) Employ student centred approaches.
2	(k) Adapt or change instructional strategies and delivery modes.	(d) Employ student centred approaches.	(v) Be better prepared for teaching critical thinking.
3	(v) Be better prepared for teaching critical thinking.	(r) Promote equity and opportunity for all students.	(h) Encourage a sense of community and belonging in the classroom.
4	(i) Respond to technical changes.	(n) Instil respect, tolerance and empathy for other cultures. (h) Encourage a sense of community and belonging in the classroom.	(k) Adapt or change instructional strategies and delivery modes.
5	(a) Establish a balance between academic and non-academic needs of students.		(r) Promote equity and opportunity for all students.

For the items related to the focus of teacher education for the future, all groups rated (d), (k) and (v). Teachers were the only ones to rate (i) *Respond to technical changes* and (a) *Establish a balance between academic and non-academic needs of students*.

Survey results from both questionnaires indicated a high priority being placed on critical thinking. “Prepare students to be critical thinkers” was ranked second by teachers and student teachers in the “Aims and Purposes of Education” questionnaire and “Better prepared for teaching critical thinking” ranked third for teachers, first for teacher educators and second for student teachers in the “Teacher education for the future” questionnaire. These results align closely with the spirit and intent of New Zealand education policy and curriculum development which place a high emphasis on independent and life long learning. “Thinking” is one of the Key Competencies in the New Zealand Curriculum Ministry of Education, 2007).

On the other hand academic skills are accorded a high priority with teachers and teacher educators giving “help students acquire academic skills” first place and student teachers ranking it in third place under “Aims and Purposes of Education”. This is in spite of New Zealand’s assessment framework removing the distinctions that previously existed between academic and non academic courses and new understandings about knowledge (Gilbert, 2005). In the “Teacher Education for the Future” questionnaire teacher responses ranked 5th “Establish a balance between academic and non-academic needs of students”.

Teacher educators and student teachers tend to place a higher priority on social values (“Encourage a sense of community and belonging in the classroom”; “Promote equity and opportunity for all students”; “instill respect tolerance and empathy for other cultures”) as opposed to teachers whose emphasis is much more strongly on focused approaches to teaching.

Despite the impact of technology on teaching and learning that has taken place over recent years and the ongoing emphasis of this in the New Zealand Curriculum,

“Respond to technological changes” was ranked fourth by teachers but was not ranked in the top five by either teacher educators or students.

The overall results indicate a very clear commitment to meeting the needs of students from all three groups in both questionnaires. This aligns with the advocacy of the Ministerial initiatives (above) which emphasize the importance of meeting the needs of individual students as opposed to a corresponding lack of emphasis on the collective needs of society as a whole.

Participants’ Comments

The small size of the teacher educator participant group (10) meant that it was often difficult to find more than two similar comments from within this group. As such ‘common themes from any sub-group could change markedly with a bigger sample size. Care should obviously be taken in extrapolating these findings to teacher education in general.

The Aims of Education

Participants were asked to comment on other ideas for the aim of education

The most common responses related to pupils’ need to have respect for others, having the ability to listen and communicate well and meeting pupil needs. Several students commented on the need for pupils to have a better appreciation for art, culture and music but the drama/music/art background of the responding students may have influenced this. Teacher educators emphasised the need to link learning to authentic practices in the real world while teachers considered the ability to communicate with others as important.

How does your own teaching practice align with your beliefs about the aims of education?

Most students responded to this question and seemed to be generally supportive of the idea that their beliefs were able to be actioned in the classroom. Only two students reported any slightly negative aspect. Of these, one commented on the somewhat formulaic action if pupils weren’t being productive classroom members –three warnings and then sit outside the DP’s office – which appeared to be at odds with the student’s desire to engage on a personal level. Another commented that as she had had just one teaching practice section there had been limited opportunity to put some beliefs into action – specifically her perceived inability to incorporate spirituality into the art curriculum in the state school she was on teaching practice. All responses indicated that there was a close match between their own beliefs and their practice with two suggesting that their curriculum areas posed some constraints.

Teachers identified the importance of developing critical thinking skills as an important aspect of their practice. Other common examples of practice included:

- Having respect for one another
- Developing positive relationships, collaboration
- Self-respect and respect for others, tolerance and courtesy
- Problem solving.

Having respect for one another and developing positive relationships was a common theme emerging in response to this question. This was reflected in many of the responses, for example:

- I believe students need to be able to relate to one another so that they are prepared to be positive members of our society. Values and cultural sensitivity are crucial with global sustainability.

- At the heart of everything is an understanding that students learn best from each other in a learning environment carefully nurtured by a supportive, engaging, interested teacher.

Teacher Education for the Future

Participants were asked to comment on other ideas for future teaching needs:

There were only 14 responses from all groups for this question, indicating the general acceptability of the list of aims provided. There was no common factor amongst the respondents. One teacher educator thought that creative thinking should be addressed, as indicated by her/his comment: “We have no idea what kind of world we are preparing young people for, but the more creative they are, the more likely they will be able to adapt”.

The teachers’ responses varied and included ideas such as:

- Manage students’ behaviour.
- Teachers need to have an understanding of pedagogy and therefore the understanding that there are different ways to teach other than the way they were taught themselves.

Alignment of own teaching practice with the teaching practice needs of future teachers:

All respondents indicated (implicitly if not explicitly) that there was a close match between their own practices and those needed in the future. A small number of teachers indicated that a constructivist approach was utilised together with a variety of teaching strategies to meet individual needs. No common theme came through from the small number of teacher educator respondents. Less than half the students responded to this question. Most of those who did respond commented on the need for pupils to be allowed to “fit in” in the classroom and to provide an environment where all students were able to participate freely. Two students mentioned the need for pupil technology skills. Few examples of these practices were cited, with no common examples coming through.

How can teacher education programmes best prepare future teachers?

Teachers commented most frequently that greater contact between initial teacher education programmes and schools was going to be important in the future. The student teachers indicated a need for greater emphasis on equity, the awareness of classroom diversity and greater links with schools. Teacher educators recommended a stronger focus on consultation and co-construction. Suggestions from all participants included:

- Critical thinking and literacy approaches to teaching and learning.
- More focus on arts and humanities – fostering appropriate values and attitudes.
- Get students beyond “survival mode” and then promote wider issues.
- Promote the role of the teacher as a co-learning facilitator; empower students
- Provide exposure to a wide range of delivery modes; focus on individual needs; be at the cutting edge of technology.
- There is a constant need to reflect and adapt. Consultation and co-construction of what is relevant in teacher education programmes should be a top priority for those with leadership roles in education.
- Promote the idea of a tutor/teacher as a co-learning facilitator. Share the learning process and not be too outcome focussed. De-construct the power of the tutor and construct and empower the student.

One teacher advocated critical thinking and metacognition and stressed that this should be a primary focus of teacher education programmes: “Teach the importance of thinking skills”. Although subject knowledge is important, it is tuning into how the students learn, their learning styles that needs addressing”.

What should be the focus of teacher education in the 21st Century?

The most common calls here were for recognition of growing diversity in schools and the provision of teaching that addressed this together with the need to address issues for pupils with disabilities.

There was no consistent response from the low number of respondents. Suggestions were to include:

- Environmental education
- Authentic use of literacy and numeracy
- Inquiry approaches to teaching and learning
- Maintaining a healthy body
- Role of education within a cultural and political context
- Appropriate pedagogical knowledge
- Technological awareness and literacy
- Life skills/ life-long learning

One respondent emphasised the importance of ensuring students are engaged as life long learners. Ultimately s/he stated that the aims of education are about “Giving children a passion for learning, by asking the difficult questions and fostering a sense of inquiry”.

Implications for initial teacher education in New Zealand

In this study we have attempted to elicit opinions from multiple stakeholders about the aims of education and therefore what they perceive as the priorities for future initial teacher education programmes. The results clearly indicate that the main challenges are:

- How can we negotiate our way through the opportunities and constraints inherent in a university-based environment that has to meet the requirements of external agents and changes in the education system?
- Deciding what we value in terms of components of programmes that will promote and enhance the aims of education
- How do we model pedagogical processes that align with future education priorities?

In our review process, the first two challenges will need to be considered in terms of balancing good initial teacher education practice with practical constraints. The data from this study indicate the importance of pedagogical modeling in initial teacher education. In particular modeling critical thinking, student-centered approaches, interactive approaches to enable students to develop relationship and communication skills are all considered by our participants to be important. Additionally, teachers in New Zealand are required to be adaptable in developing instructional strategies to meet the needs and interests of their students.

The aspects indicated above (as well as other emerging shifts in educational emphases) are more likely to be addressed by teachers if they reflect critically on their practice (Brookfield, 1995; Zeichner & Liston, 1996; Snook, 2000). Therefore critical reflection needs to be an explicit part of initial teacher education programmes. Wherever possible, student teachers should be challenged to consider themselves as more than simply classroom performers. They must be knowledgeable about schools and education and be able to evaluate new and existing policies alongside current socio-cultural issues so that they can help to plan a better educational future.

One of the interesting aspects of teacher education programs is their ability to incorporate aspects of local and global culture. The underachievement of Maori students, addressed in *Ka Hikitia*, in mainstream settings has been a priority of the New Zealand Government, given that over 85% of Maori students are currently in the mainstream or general school system rather than in Kura Kaupapa or other Maori medium language immersion settings (Ministry of Education, 2006). The New Zealand schooling system has continued to perform less well for Maori students. This is due in part to mainstream teachers having lower expectations of Maori children, failing to effectively identify or reflect on how their practice impacts on the educational experiences of Maori students, and due to the limited support to address these specific issues (Alton-Lee, 2003). Pre-service teacher education programmes in the future will need to focus on culturally congruent and empowering pedagogies, such as place-based approaches to make content relevant to support the educational aspirations of Maori.

The notion that teachers need to connect with the worlds (cultures) to which students belong is consistent with the principles that have been associated with kaupapa Maori pedagogies (Bishop *et al.*, 2003) and the Pasifika education priorities of belonging to a learning community, consultation as a key driver of stakeholder engagement, acknowledging different cultures and beliefs, respecting diversity, empowerment through identifying and building on strengths, the role of Fanau, Fono, family and community in education success and acknowledging languages as integral to identity and culture (Ministry of Education, 2001). There is also a need to encourage teacher collegiality so that teachers work collaboratively on transformative teaching practices that enhance the learning of Maori and Pasifika students (Ministry of Education, 2006).

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